THE ILLUSTRATED ART-JOURNAL CATALOGUE.*

The completed catalogue of the Great Exhibition issued by the proprietors of the *Art-Journal* is now before us, and forms a truly extraordinary volume, creditable not only to editor, writers, draughtsmen, engravers, printers, and all concerned in its production, but to the country. Every one of about 400 pages is filled with illustrations: if we said, on a rough calculation, that there are nearly 3,000 of them, we should probably not be far from right, and those who know the trouble and expense attending the production of such engravings will best estimate the way in which this work has been carried through. The cost must, indeed, have been enormous, and but for the connection of the catalogue with an established journal, it could scarcely have been published at such a price as would have secured a sufficient sale.

Of course it is not without faults, the most prominent of which, as it seems to us, is the want of any means of judging of the *real size* of the objects represented, but of these we intend to say nothing.

The catalogue is preceded by an able, succinct history of the project and of the building, illustrated with views of the interior and exterior; and then at the end of the volume there are essays "on the Science of the Exhibition," by Mr. Hunt; "on the Vegetable Kingdom," as exemplified by it, by Professor Forbes; "on the Harmony of Colours," by Mrs. Merrifield; "on the Machinery of the Exhibition," by Professor Gordon; and the prize essay, "The Exhibition as a Lesson in Taste," by Mr. Wornum.

The engravings were executed under the superintendence of Messrs. Dalziel. Mr. W. H. Rogers designed the head and tail pieces, and Messrs. Bradbury and Evans printed the book.

And why may we not name and give praise to the able and excellent editor, Mr. Samuel Carter Hall, by whom the whole was struck out and superintended. As editor of the *Art-Journal*, Mr. Hall laboured hard for many years with more advantage to the public than himself. But he has now achieved for his journal the pecuniary success which such labours deserve, and earnestly and sincerely we congratulate him upon it.

The examples we give of the illustrations in the Catalogue represent—1. The Gothic Bookcase, carved in oak, presented by the Emperor of Austria to the Queen of England. This was designed by M. Bernadis and executed by Messrs. Leistler and Son. 2. A clever terra-cotta Font, from Switzerland, by J. Ziegler Pellis, of Zurich; and 3. Iron work for the Door of a Church, by Mr. W. Haslam, of Derby.

* George Virtue, London.

ENRICHED GOTHIC MOULDINGS.

In a paper published in your journal (p. 511, *ante*), Mr. Little attempts to establish as a "*principle*" *that was in no case departed from* by the architects of the Middle Ages, that the contour of their mouldings was "never" disturbed by sculptured enrichment.

This opinion has occurred to many architects; but, on a more extended observation, has been discarded, as certainly not of universal, although it must be acknowledged of very general application. I send you a tracing of the necking mould, of a finial from the sedilia of Exeter Cathedral, which, as you well know, is of excellent design and workmanship; also a tracing of a flat ogee mould surrounding a monument in the Lady Chapel of the same cathedral, and closely resembling in arrangement the Roman water-leaf, with a difference only in the adoption of the well-known and characteristic leaf of the period.

I am very unwilling to believe that these are solitary instances in which what Mr. Little conceives to be a "principle" has been disregarded by the Middle-age architects; but they are the only examples that I can now recollect having met with. The enriched necking mould I send is almost universally used in Exeter Cathedral, and the design varies in almost every case.

I think these justify my remarks, and refute Mr. Little's statement to the effect that for a period of nearly 400 years this system was so entirely set aside that *no instance can be produced of the slightest approach to the classic system.*

Such questions are useful, and should by all means be raised: I therefore trust these remarks will be received as kindly meant.

W. H. B.

Books.

Catalogue of the Museum of Mediæval Art collected by the late L. N. Cottingham, F.S.A., Architect.

It is to be regretted that the application made to Government to purchase this valuable collection has failed, and that it is but too likely to be taken to pieces under the hammer of the auctioneers, Messrs. Foster having already advertised its sale on 3rd November and fifteen days subsequent. If so, however, it is to be hoped at least that a selection of models, as examples for workmen, will be procured for the Artisans' Work-Schools, set a-going by recent communications in our columns.

The World in its Workshops: a practical Examination of British and Foreign Processes of Manufacture; with a Critical Comparison of the Fabrics, Machinery, and Works of Art contained in the Great Exhibition. By James Ward. Orr and Co., Paternoster-row.

We are glad to see that this little volume, one of the best of those published on the International Exhibition, has run through its first edition, and that there is a demand for a second. Having already reviewed it favourably, we need only now recommend it again as a pleasant discourse on an inexhaustible subject. By way of contrast, however, to the apparently disparaging remarks lately made by some one or other of our own writers in The Builder, on theoretical men as contrasted with practical, we may quote the following from the introduction:—

"'Do I mean to say that *practical* minds are not capable of availing themselves of the improvements they may see in the Exhibition?' I really do. Take the mass of what are called 'practical' minds, as a body they are nearly as inapt to appreciate and apply improvements as the mere loungers and idlers who saunter through the treasure-stored avenues of the building. They will look with perhaps a shrewder eye at the several objects upon the production of which they may have been partially engaged; but the result, in a majority of cases, will prove little more than a negative: they must wait for the thinking few to lead them, from whom all practical knowledge of a valuable nature is derived. These few are the stars that guide the many in the true path of improvement; but as yet they are below the horizon, gathering light, as it were, to shine steadily and clearly on the future course of their humbler 'practical' brethren."

Miscellanea.

Fatal Accident at St. George's Hall, Liverpool.—On Friday before last, the Rev. D. Wilkie died at the infirmary from injuries received by falling through a staircase opening at St. George's Hall. The unfortunate gentleman was viewing the building, when he saw an opening in the floor, and thinking that it was a staircase, he stepped with the intention of descending the stairs. It proved, however, to be merely an aperture, to which the stairs had not been attached. The deceased fell with great force into the lower floor, a height of about thirteen feet, and one of his legs was dreadfully fractured, which injury caused his death. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, expressing an opinion that precautions should be taken to prevent accidents of a similar nature in future, and suggesting that a guide should be provided to conduct visitors through the building.

Encroachments in St. Pancras.—A "District Surveyor," replying to our correspondent, "F. B. A.," says,—since the passing of the Act 7 Geo. 4, alluded to, the character of the property bordering on the New-road has become entirely changed; the houses for the purposes of private residences being all but valueless: the traffic being now enormously increasing, the old residents have taken wing to quieter locations: one-storied shops are being built for the purposes of trade, over these gardens, and the line of road bids fair to rival Oxford-street. There have been several actions under the Act above alluded to: the last one was compromised by the parties agreeing to set back the shops three feet to widen the footway: it was also doubtful whether an addition to a house could be brought under the term "erection of any building." The entire roadway and footways are now six feet wider than before, no *inconsiderable boon* to the public, and some little sacrifice on the part of the owners of property. As far as the Building Act is concerned, the Commissioners of Works and Building state these erections do not come within the scope of the Building Act. This has been for some time a *vexata quæstio* among the profession, many conceiving that they did. The writer further says, it may fairly be doubted whether they can be brought under the Act 7 Geo. 4; the road commissioners have waived any claim that they might have had under this imperfectly worded Act, by tacitly acquiescing in these erections for years past, and are not now in a position to enforce the Act, admitting the Act to be so construed as not to leave a question. Still he thinks the public have no great ground of complaint, as they are benefitted by the footways being each increased three feet in width.

The Peat Bogs in Ireland.—A new attempt to convert the Irish peat bogs to profitable account, has been made in the county of Kerry, by the Great Peat Working Company of Ireland. For some weeks past several hundred hands have been employed in preparing a supply of peat, and the first stone had been laid of a new station, in the vicinity of Cahirciveen, and within a short distance of the harbour of Valencia. This will be completed, and the necessary machinery be at work, in between two and three months. The object of this company is the preparation of compressed peat, charcoal, and tar. The first of these articles is obtained, it is said, of a density equal to that of pitcoal, and not inferior in any respect as fuel, while in some respects superior, and also more economical. It is prepared in blocks of any required size, the sides of which, from the great pressure to which the peat is subjected, are said to have all the appearance of a high polish, and may even be handled without soiling the most delicately-coloured glove. In the preparation of the charcoal the tar is economised and collected, for the preservation of timber; and for illumination, it is said, a superior gas may be obtained from it, at about one-half the cost of that prepared from pitcoal.

The Colosseum, Regent's Park.—Looking in here the other evening we found the building crowded with visitors, nor can we wonder, for it is certainly a supereminently beautiful exhibition. Danson's fine picture of "Paris by Night," is an object of general interest to all the foreigners who visit London: its truth and deception are equally startling. Besides "Paris by Night," they have Parris in the morning, if we may be allowed a quibble; for the panorama of "London," by that artist, has been restored to its place, and forms an important feature of the exhibition.

Equestrian Statue of the Queen in Glasgow.—At the Glasgow Town Council the sum of 500*l.* has been voted for an equestrian statue of the Queen, in commemoration of her Majesty's visit to the city in August, 1849. The private subscription towards the same object already exceeds 3,000*l.* and the work will be commenced forthwith. As division of opinion may exist regarding the choice of an artist, it has been suggested by some gentlemen that the nomination should be placed in the hands of Prince Albert.

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